

§ 45.185

(3) The load line certificate is valid for the St. Joseph and Muskegon routes, and intermediate ports. However, operators must comply with the route-specific requirements on the certificate.

(4) The freeboard assignment, operational limitations, and towboat requirements of this subpart must appear on the certificate.

(b) *Conditions of assignment.* (1) An initial load line survey under § 42.09-25 of this chapter and subsequent annual surveys under § 42.09-40 of this chapter are required.

(2) At the request of the barge owner, the initial load line survey may be conducted with the barge afloat if the following conditions are met:

(i) The barge is less than 10 years old;

(ii) The draft during the survey does not exceed 15 inches (380 millimeters);

(iii) The barge is empty and thoroughly cleaned of all debris, excessive rust, scale, mud, and water. All internal structure must be accessible for inspection;

(iv) Gaugings are taken to the extent necessary to verify that the scantlings are in accordance with approved drawings;

(v) The hull plating (bottom and sides) and stiffeners below the light waterline are closely examined internally. If the surveyor determines that sufficient cause exists, the surveyor may require that the barge be drydocked or hauled out and further external examination conducted; and

(vi) The initial load line certificate is to be issued for a term of 5 years or until the barge reaches 10 years of age, whichever occurs first. Once this certificate expires, the barge must be drydocked or hauled out and be fully examined internally and externally.

§ 45.185 Tow limitations.

(a) Barges must not be manned.

(b) No more than three barges per tow on the Milwaukee, St. Joseph, and Muskegon routes.

(c) Barges must not be more than 5 nautical miles from shore.

§ 45.187 Weather limitations.

(a) Tows on the Burns Harbor route must operate during fair weather conditions only.

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(b) The weather limits (ice conditions, wave height, and sustained winds) for the Milwaukee, St. Joseph, and Muskegon routes are specified in § 45.171, table 45.171.

(c) If weather conditions are expected to exceed these limits at any time during the voyage, the tow must not leave harbor or, if already underway, must proceed to the nearest appropriate harbor of safe refuge.

§ 45.191 Pre-departure requirements.

Before beginning each voyage, the towing vessel master must conduct the following:

(a) *Weather forecast.* Determine the marine weather forecast along the planned route, and contact the dock operator at the destination port to get an update on local weather conditions.

(b) *Inspection.* Inspect each barge of the tow to ensure that they meet the following requirements:

(1) A valid load line certificate, if required, is on board;

(2) The barge is not loaded deeper than permitted;

(3) The deck and side shell plating are free of visible holes, fractures, or serious indentations, as well as damage that would be considered in excess of normal wear;

(4) The cargo box side and end coamings are watertight;

(5) All manholes are covered and secured watertight;

(6) All voids are free of excess water; and

(7) Precautions have been taken to prevent shifting of cargo.

(c) *Verifications.* On voyages north of St. Joseph, the towing vessel master must contact a mooring/docking facility in St. Joseph, Holland, Grand Haven, and Muskegon to verify that sufficient space is available to accommodate the tow. The tow cannot venture onto Lake Michigan without confirmed space available.

(d) *Log entries.* Before getting underway, the towing vessel master must note in the logbook that the pre-departure barge inspections, verification of mooring/docking space availability, and weather forecast checks were performed, and record the freeboards of each barge.